

The Basics of Search Engine Optimization

Focus & Strategy



Finding the Right Search Terms

Three key questions

When starting out with any kind of search engine optimization you should ask yourself these three key questions:

1. What keywords do I want to be associated with?
2. Are people actually searching for these keywords?
3. Is it possible to achieve good rankings with these keywords?

What keywords do I want to be associated with?

- » The right focus is essential for successful search engine optimization.
- » Think carefully about the keywords you want to be associated with in search results.
 - » What do I offer?
 - » Where do I offer it or where am I based?
 - » Who is my target group?
 - » What would this target group search for?
- » Concentrate on the essentials.
- » Instead of general terms such as “hair salon” or “repair shop”, go for phrases like “hair salon Springfield” or “tire changes in New York”.

Are people actually searching for these keywords?

- » Keywords are only relevant if people are searching for them.
- » Before you begin optimizing, always check the search volume of your selected keywords.
- » Compile a list of alternatives, synonyms and related terms, and check their search volume as well.
- » You can check keyword search volumes with Google AdWords. If you need any help, let us know. We'll be happy to do the checks for you.

Is it possible to achieve good rankings with these keywords?

- » Search term relevancy is measured on how popular the term in question is.
- » The truth is: If you're not an expert and don't have a large budget to spend, you won't have much of a chance of ranking highly with certain, more popular terms.
- » In these cases, it's usually better to concentrate on other keywords.

Creating the Right Content

The right content for the right search terms

- » With the help of the three key questions, you should have been able to identify your “focus keywords” – the main search terms you want to use.

- » Now, for each term you need to ask: Do I already have content related to this term? Do I already have a corresponding web page and URL?
 - » If the answer is no: Create a page.
 - » If the answer is yes: Optimize your existing content.

- » You will only be found if you offer something that can be found and, above all, is relevant.

Create real added value

- » Always ask yourself: What is Google's intention? What does Google want?

Google wants to provide users with the best and most relevant results for their search terms.

- » So, create good content and give people exactly what they want to find!

A quick SEO 101

Tips, Tricks and Some Basic Rules

The most important things you should know about SEO

- » There's no other online marketing discipline where people argue as much as in search engine optimization.
- » The experts are constantly moving between knowledge, assumptions, and experiments.
- » There are only very few genuine, well-known "facts" about the Google algorithm.
- » If you want to learn more about SEO online, make sure that the sources you use are reliable and up to date!
- » Always adhere to the following basic rules:

URLs, headings, and images

- » The target page URL should always contain the focus keyword. For example, if you want to create a page for the search term “head massage Springfield”, a good URL would be: <https://www.mysalon.com/head-massage-springfield>
- » Furthermore, the main heading on the page – known as the H1 heading in SEO speak – should also contain the complete focus keyword.

URLs, headings, and images

- » Generally, images are rated positively by Google as they can improve the content of a page. A page without any pictures is usually boring – and even Google knows that.
- » However, it's important that you let Google know what is in your pictures. You do this by adding alternative text via the alt text tag.
- » So, for a page using the keywords “head massage Springfield”, you should include a corresponding image. The alt text of the main image should contain the focus keyword, e.g. “Relaxing head massage in Springfield”.
- » Admittedly, it's possible to trick Google a little bit when it comes to alt text...

Links

- » A page that is not linked will not rank in search results.
- » When you create a new page, be sure to link it to other pages of your website.
- » Look for suitable places on your website where you can link pages to each other.
- » The footer is often ideal for internal links.
- » Make sure you don't link to different pages using the same text (anchor text).
- » We also recommend using the focus keyword as an anchor text to link to the corresponding page.
- » External links from other websites can also have a positive effect on your ranking.

Fast loading times

- » There's one aspect of SEO that all the experts agree on: Google loves fast websites.
- » Since it takes a long time to load large amounts of data, it's best to avoid big, irrelevant files.
- » For example, if you upload an image, make sure you upload it with the right dimensions and in a compressed form (e.g. using tinypng.com).



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